



# Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission

## Public Comment at Commission Meetings

**THIS POLICY IS EFFECTIVE AS OF NOVEMBER 13, 2014.**

The Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) adopts the following policy regarding public comment protocol at Commission meetings.

The Commission values public input and will request public comment on applicable agenda items during regularly scheduled Commission meetings. Before public comment is taken, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (Department) presents a briefing and recommendation on the agenda item. A Commissioner then proposes a motion based upon the Department's recommendations. Typically, with the exception stated below, members of the public will be offered the opportunity to comment on the motion proposed by the Commission. The Commission reserves the right to limit length of comment due to time constraints and fairness. The Commission begins deliberations after the closure of public comment. During deliberations, the Commission may ask questions of the Department or persons who made public comment. The Commission will then take executive action.

The Commission may take action on any clearly described item appearing on the agenda, whether the item indicates "Proposal," "Endorsement," or "Final." If an agenda item described as "Informational," the Commission will not hear public comment and will not take action.

In light of the extensive opportunity for public comment at meetings across the state on hunting, fishing and trapping regulations, and as a matter of equity for citizens who cannot attend the Commission meeting, when making final decisions on hunting, fishing and trapping regulations, the Commission will not open public comment unless a significant amendment to the tentative proposal is brought forth by the Department. Any comment taken will be limited to the amendment only. The Agenda for each meeting will reflect this exception to public comment opportunity.

### STATEMENT OF LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR THE RULE

Section 2-3-103, MCA gives the Fish and Wildlife Commission and the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks authority to adopt and enforce rules and guidelines regarding public participation in its decisions.

This rule was adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission on November 13, 2014.

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Dan Vermillion, Chairman  
Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission